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Academy of Music, 1994

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With kind regards from
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POEMS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Interiora Rerum ; or, The Inside of Things

By 'QUIVIS.' John Lane, 1917.

P O E M S

BY

E. G. HARMAN

LONDON

EDWARD ARNOLD

1920

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PREFACE

To address the public in a volume of poetry is a formidable undertaking. But, with the exception of the last six, these poems have matured for so long, that the author feels that they must now be taken into consumption or perish. And he would rather see them perish, if need be, by a public verdict than by his own act. They represent, in the main, a sort of spiritual diary, and were written from time to time over a number of years, according to the mood or fancy which suggested them. It seems to the author therefore that they may have some value or interest, as they stand in relation to a period of time which, in the retrospect, seems to have been one of exceptional moment in the life of the civilised world, and of this country in particular. The positive tone of Science which was so pronounced in the earlier portion of it has become greatly modified, and beliefs, which were regarded by some as established on a materialistic basis, have been shaken. As a consequence men are turning their thoughts more to the quest of spiritual reality. Poetry may reflect and perhaps help to formulate such tendencies.

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In order to show the chronological sequence the dates of composition have been appended to the several pieces, where the author had a record of them, or where, at this distance of time, he could recall them. In one or two cases where no dates are given the piece was begun at one period and completed at another. An example of this is in the piece entitled 'Regret' at p. 36. It has been included under the earlier period because it was begun then, but it was not completed until many years later.

The translations and adaptations (Pt. II.) have been selected as the best from a small collection of such things which appeared under the author's name in 1897. The alternative version of Sappho's Invocation to Aphrodite is more recent. The translations of Sappho's *Φαίνεται μοι*, and of the 'Lesbia' and 'At a Brother's Grave' of Catullus, have been revised, and, it is hoped, improved.

Some of these pieces have appeared, over the signature of 'Quivis,' in the *Westminster Gazette*, and are reprinted by kind permission of the Editor.

E. G. H.

London, 1919.

CONTENTS

PART I

POEMS, 1888-1898

	PAGE
RETROSPECT	3
DISILLUSIONMENT	4
ALONE	5
A SUPERIOR PERSON'S VADE-MECUM	6
ON WORDSWORTH, AFTER READING 'THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET'	7
LONDON LINES : A FRAGMENT	9
REVERIE	10
NECESSITY	11
EXAGGERATION	12
'RECESSIONAL'	13
ALONE IN LONDON	14
THE WORLD'S DESIRE	15
POETRY	16
THE 'MELENCOLIA' OF ALBERT DÜRER	17
SONG : 'SWIFT FLOW THE HOURS'	20
THE CAVALIER OVER HIS BOTTLE	21
NIGHT PIECE	22

	PAGE
VERSES FOR AN OPERETTA	23
MY LADY'S HAIR	24
A SUMMER IDYL	25
THE SCULPTOR AND THE FROG	26
A FRAGMENT	27
NOVEMBER MORNING	28
THOUGHTS	29
A FISHING BALLAD	30
SONG: 'WHAT WERE THOSE KISSES'	32
ART	33
HUMAN LIFE	34
EN ROUTE	35
REGRET	36
NOCTURNE	37
THE ECSTASY OF ST. AUGUSTINE	38
A DIALOGUE OF TO-DAY	40
A HARD SAYING	43

PART II

TRANSLATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS, 1891-1896

From, or after Horace

AN INVOCATION	47
PYRRHA	49
THE FAUN	51
A POET'S FAME	53
AN EARLY SPRING DAY	55

	PAGE
'O NAVIS'	56
BY THE WAY	57
A MAN'S LOVE	58
'PERSICOS ODI'	59

Translations from Catullus

TO LESBIA	61
THE DEAD SPARROW	63
SIRMIO	65
SOLILOQUY	67
AT A BROTHER'S GRAVE	71

Translations from Sappho

'PEER OF THE GODS'	73
INVOCATION TO APHRODITE	75
ANOTHER VERSION OF THE SAME	78

Miscellaneous

AN EPITAPH	80
THE OLD GUIDE	81
SIMONIDES OF AMORGOS ON WOMEN	82

PART III

POEMS, SUBSEQUENT TO 1898

POESY (I. AND II.)	87
IN THE WORLD: A FRAGMENT	88
SUMMER DAWN	93

	PAGE
REQUIESCAT IN PACE	94
TO THE BELOVED	95
HIS MARRIAGE	96
THOUGHTS	97
WAR	98
A POLITICAL ARGUMENT	99
RESULTS	100
A CAREER	101
TO A HUMAN SOUL	102
SONG: 'AH, MISTRESS MINE'	103
1832-1902	104
LIFE'S PROBLEM	106
RODIN	107
A LATE AUTUMN DAY	108
AT AN EXHIBITION OF OLD SILVER	109
'EVERYMAN'	110
PRÆTERITA	111
IN MEMORIAM, R. H.	112
'IF THE DEAD ARE NOT RAISED'	113
'I LOOKED UPON THE DEAD'	114
A VISION OF LIFE	115
A WISH	116
INFINITE WONDER OF WORLDS	117
A LONDON PARK	118
MOURN NOT	119
'LA SOURCE' OF VICTOR HUGO: TRANSLATION	121

WAR VERSES

	PAGE
THE GUNS	122
ON THE CLIFFS	124
BEREAVEMENT	125
BRITANNIA	127
A BOMB IN THE TEMPLE	128
THE GLORIOUS DEAD	131



PART I
POEMS, 1888-1898

RETROSPECT

Dost thou remember the days which forever
Are unforgotten, the days gone by ?
Canst thou not see them, where over the spaces
Of time in the sunlight they dreaming lie ?

Bright in that dreamland their still enchantment
Sleeps in a ray from the rift of a cloud,
A garden of sunshine embosomed, whose radiance
Gleams 'mid the gloom of the gathering shroud,

Which, far as the eye in its vision may wander,
Stretches away to the shadowy shore,
That gathers about in its dim enfoldings
The wide unknown and the nevermore.

1888.

DISILLUSIONMENT

(After Turner's picture, Ulysses defying the Cyclops)

COMRADES in fair and stormy weather,
Through the long day from the early morn,
Do you remember the start together,
And the land we left at the dawn ?

That limitless, undiscovered country,
Seen through the glowing gates of the day,
From storied heights around whose circles
Sweep the eddying clouds away.

Where we climbed supreme, and on canvas of cloudland,
Hung through the realms of space, we drew
Forms that we caught from the huge abysses,
To melt at a breath from our view.

What matter ? for ours were the hues of the sunrise,
Ours the old exultation, the dream and the strife,
Against gods with our youth to heap up our mountains,¹
Our chalice the world, the wine life.

We have grown content with a homelier tippie,
Since we sailed from that land in the dawn of the day,
And set the ship's head to the long dark furrows,
On the spaces of ocean grey.

And we 'll think it enough if, though hardly, we win to
Some haven of rest from the gulf of the sea,
With a plank and a votive rag to offer
To whatever gods there be.

1888.

¹ 'Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam.'

ALONE

DUSK, and a gloaming sky,
Just streaked with the dying day,
And a breath more faintly and fainter drawn
Of a life that ebbs away.

Night, and the sullen sound
Of wind at a streaming pane,
And a stifled sob for the one dear face
That never will come again.

Dawn, and a flying drift
Of clouds, with the light between,
Palely falling on features still,
Where the hand of death has been.

1888.

A SUPERIOR PERSON'S VADE-MECUM

PROFESS yourself a Liberal
Of Mr. Gladstone's faith, and call
The usual man a vulgar person ;
Regard him with unfeigned aversion,
But make it clear you 're in the van
Of progress, an enlightened man,
Quite different from the common Tory,
Who values military glory,
And such effete and blatant things
As Parsons, Churches, Peers, and Kings.

Learn to pronounce, with accent slow,
The frigid, deprecatory ' Oh.'

See that the soul-flower, year by year,
Spreads in a cultured atmosphere,
And every stage of self-improvement
Identify with some new movement,
Breathed to a few behind the scenes,
In cloistered walks of Dons and Deans.

Leave facts to drudges, catch the spirit,
Moles, in their way, no doubt have merit,
But anxious worlds expect from you,
To seize the wider point of view.

And oh, good sirs, pray don't forget
To observe the rules of etiquette.

1889.

ON WORDSWORTH

(After reading 'The Affliction of Margaret')

REVERENCE the man,
Who, with clear soul and calm,
Answers the hardest things, and points to faith
And promise fair in what most barren seems,
Even in the wreck of all our hopes and joys.

He, undismayed,
Looked on our life, the seeming sport of fate,
And marked its sorrows :
Sorrows of simple folk, more sorrowful
Than those which come to men of wider range.

We who dwell in towns
Know less the speaking pathos of dumb grief
That mourns alone, fed by those pensive moods,
Which nature, wedded to a thousand ties
Of place and custom, stirs in human hearts.

Change and the busy scene
May oft avail to fill an aching void,
Which brooding solitude,
Amid the quiet of familiar things,
Makes wide to entertain the sad guest, grief.

Less understood,
On gentle hearts whose love is all their life,
Descend those pitiless strokes,
Which tempt the wisest souls to doubt all aim
Or purpose in the jarring war of things.

The poet speaks,
Touched with a coal from God's own altar flame,
And points to signs, set like that glorious bow,
Which erst, upon the shuddering gaze of man,
Trembled athwart the blackness into light.

As, on some pass
Cloudgirt, the traveller leans upon his staff,
Spent with his toil, and, as he leans, a ray
Breaks through the vaporous mass, which stirs and
rolls

Its cloudy folds apart, and far below
Reveals the slopes that stretch to sunny plains ;

The poet speaks,
And lo, before our eyes
Hovers awhile o'er unimagined worlds
A floating gleam, shed over mysteries
Of things that are beyond our mortal ken.

Ever the urge !
Ever th' unwearied beat of pulsing life
Through seed and blade and stem !
Heedless of buried pasts Nature renews
Her myriad shapes ; day follows night, and spring
Returns to fill the earth with light and joy.

Through all, humanity !
With sweet insistence, like the gentle flower
Which stoops her lovely head beneath the blasts
Of winter, so to meet the earliest kiss
Of tender suns that pledge the faith of spring.

1889.

LONDON LINES

(*A Fragment*¹)

Up from the Strand, across Trafalgar Square,
Comes the chill blast which greets us as we fare
Upon our way ; the plunging fountain leaps
And breaks upon the gale, which onward sweeps
Past Regent's Colonnade with moans and sighs,
Rousing a demon in the bloodshot eyes
Of the old woman in whose trembling claw
Are stowed the wares which shield her from the law.
There at her post she stands, early and late,
A rusty bonnet toppling on her pate,
Letting escape a thin grey whisp of hair,
Which spins and flutters in the boisterous air,
Relic of locks which made her once the belle
Of half the lanes and courts of Clerkenwell.

I often wonder if these people feel
All we suppose, for, born to turn the wheel
Of labour in all weathers, well, they must,
One would conclude, get harder in the crust
Than we who live in stuffy rooms, and rub
Away the tissue in the daily tub.
Have not the lords of houses in retreat
As many skeletons as walk the street ?
But hold ! I fear the democratic people
Will up and hang me on the nearest steeple ;
Schemes are abroad, I'm told, of wondrous magic,
And, clearly, the old woman looks most tragic ;
Though how to mend what fate has marred so sorely,
I leave to Providence and good J——n M——.

1890.

¹ This is a portrait from life of an old beggar woman, who used to stand regularly, and in all weathers, under the Regent's Colonnade, a site now occupied by the Carlton Hotel.

REVERIE

O THAT we two might cross the drowsy stream
Which wends, 'tis said, betwixt this world of ours
And that which stretches in a golden dream
Of spring eternal and undying flowers ;
That we might walk together, hand in hand,
Through gardens gay and soft Elysian fields,
Where Hermes gathers with his potent wand
Those happy spirits whom from harm he shields.
There, in the quiet of a clearer air,
On far off half-forgotten days we 'd muse,
Old days of earth, unquiet days that were—
And yet, for all that bliss, I would not lose,
To win such heaven, the moment when you smiled
Through shining tears, and we were reconciled.

NECESSITY

You speak of ills for which no cure is found,
Ills which are thine to bear and mine to see,
Powerless to alter aught that destiny
Hath fore-ordained, or loose what fate has bound.
Have you not heard the melancholy sound
Of waves which sadly surge upon the shore,
And marked the long forlorn withdrawing roar,
As with dull rage they sweep the pebbly ground ?
Methinks that in that sound I hear the voice
Of ages driven by the ebb and flow
Of wasteful time, which, without will or choice,
Break on a barren shore, and, breaking, go
Back to the restless hollows of the sea,
Whose bounds are set by fate eternally.

EXAGGERATION

THOSE lines I wrote thee in remorseful vein
I would not have unwrit—yet do I shrink
From words which melt the heart and fire the brain,
For life is hard. And 'tis not good to think
Too much on all that shows beneath the play
Of human things. For fancy—like a lamp,
That, on some misty night, with poring ray,
Casts monstrous shadows on the clinging damp—
Scares us full oft with images that rise
In strange distortion of familiar things,
Which, seen in the broad day with healthful eyes,
Breed no such fears. Blindly dame Fortune flings
Her random gifts. What men have borne may still
Be borne with quiet air and steadfast will.

1890.

‘ RECESSIONAL ’

’MID silence of the vast expanse,
I looked on Nature’s countenance,
Where, ’neath the deep, unfathomed sky,
The sweet, earth-breathing pastures lie.

I saw the night’s star-woven tent
Spread in the spacious firmament,
And in her eastern chamber clear
The sudden, silent moon appear.

For me, when birds began to trill,
Flashed the great sun above the hill,
And in the quiet vales of sheep
I watched the mists of morning creep.

O God, how great, beyond compare,
Are all Thy works through earth and air !
Long time a wanderer from Thy ways,
I bow my head in prayer and praise.

1890.

ALONE IN LONDON

NAMELESS am I, 'mid folk without a name,
And dwellings nameless. Through dark window panes,
Down the long avenues of crowded lanes,
Peer nameless faces. Voices with no name,
Out of that voice which ever seems the same,
Pass on the air, and, passing, tell no tale.
From nameless hearths the myriad smoke wreaths trail,
Weaving a drift that reddens in the flame
Of myriad lamps, whose tiny rays reveal
The linaments of countless moving masks,
Faces which gather from the gloom and steal
Back to the night, the whither no man asks,
The whence unheeded—O, ye dwellers here,
Such is your city of my nameless fear!

1890.

THE WORLD'S DESIRE

OPEN the heavens, O Lord, and let me see
The vision of my great felicity,
The consummation of those waking dreams,
Where nothing is that is not, or that seems
Something attainable, and straight again
Dies like the sunlit sparkles after rain.
O, that from out the impenetrable haze,
And baffling silence of unsounded skies,
Some light of heaven might break upon the ways
We wander darkling, and illumine the eyes,
Which watch in weariness and close in pain,
After long watching, where is little gain
Of all the dim imaginings we see—
Speak, Lord, the fulness surely dwells in Thee.

1890.

POETRY

PLAGUE on these poets and their prating verse !
Conned o'er by boys and women, till their heads
Are stuffed with stale delusions—'tis a curse
That poisons the still growths of life, and spreads
A lazy, clogging mist upon the eye,
Dulling its vision with unwholesome tints,
Through captious prisms drawn, from lights that lie
Broadly upon the world. Beauty imprints
Her seal on common things, but, taught by these
Poor, sickly dreamers, men are fain to turn
With shrill complaints from such, to seek what flees
Ever before them, till, too late, they learn
All they have lost in their perverse disdain,
Who, thinking to have lived, have lived in vain.

1890.

THE 'MELENCOLIA' OF ALBERT DÜRER

BEHOLD her, where she keeps her lonely state,
On some high beakèd headland of the sea,
Silent she sits, and motionless as fate,
A maiden strange, yeapt Melánocholic ;
Enthralled she seems by some dark reverie,
That holds her in a long entrancèd dream,
Some vision wide of fateful phantasy,
Fell as those slant and dolorous rays which seem
Athwart that dismal sea with baleful light to stream.

Mortal she seems, yet in no mortal mould
Her mighty limbs are cast, whose massive grace
Shows 'neath the woman's robe, which, fold on fold,
Flows from its gathered cincture to its base ;
Her waist some fretful broideries enlace,
Yet loosely set, for in her form revealed,
No rounded softness here the eye may trace,
But store of ponderous strength, which waits concealed
Beneath those straining seams two mighty wings to
wield.

Bowed by the load of some Titanic thought,
Her head upon her hand doth seem to rest,
Yet in her gaze no weariness, nor aught
Seems there of weakness, nor, with care oppressed,
Such as to mortals comes a frequent guest,
Seems she to pause in that dark lethargy
Of thought inactive, to no toil addressed.
The sand runs in the glass ; 'tis strange that she
'Thus in the fulness of her strength should heedless be.

Nor yet are lacking to her dexterous hand
Those implements of skill and deep design,
Which men, from age to age, and land to land,
Yoked in stern conflict with a fate malign,
Have slowly fashioned for some end condign,
Urged evermore by fond imaginings
To read the riddle of each heavenly sign,
And those of earth, and eke the nether springs,
And, mastering all, at last to know the source of things.

But stricken ere her task were half begun,
Her listless hand has drooped upon her knee,
Though all is ready, nothing has been done,
Or, done, seems nothing of what still should be ;
Closed is the book, despised the mystery
Of square and line, of compass, cube and sphere,
The various tools disused, she seems to see
Nothing around her, nothing seems to hear,
Like one who is spellbound by some enchantment drear.

Dark is her countenance as midnight skies,
When all the stars by clouds are gathered in,
Save where the eager windows of her eyes
Reveal the sullen fires which glow within—
The torment of a spirit that would win
Some goal of thought beyond this world of sense,
But sees, or ere the task it may begin,
How vain the means to match that thought intense,
Vain as the births of time and all its goings hence.

And yet a laurel wreath about her brow
Proclaims her mistress of some high renown,
A garland culled from Phœbus' sacred bough
Perchance by dwellers of that sea-girt town,

Which, from her lonely headland looking down,
She may desery—but them she heedeth not,
Nor little recks of laurel or of crown,
Or gracious praise of men, whose lowlier lot
Her art hath raised ; all in one thought is quite forgot.

One thought, whose dark intent, with heedful care,
From that young fledgling boy she seems to hide,
Who, all unwitting of what passes there,
Essays his simple lesson at her side ;
Bravely his baby fist is closed to guide
The wavering pencil, while his stubborn slate
Grates on the stillness.—Say, what tasks untried
May here find strange beginnings, here await
Their issues yet unwoven on the looms of Fate !

O youth, O life, O silent mystery
Of still on-coming life ! O quenchless stream,
Flushed from cool cisterns, in whose holds the sea,
That laves the wandering shores of earth, would seem
But as the dew that kindles in the beam
Of the new-risen sun ! Ah, who shall weigh
The measure and the compass of thy dream,
O youth, most dear and dreadful ; who shall say
To-morrow's hope is but the pain of yesterday ?

The bow is in the cloud, upon the hill
The far gleam hovers ; but no ray may cheer
The vision dark of her who watches still,
Inscrutable, as erst she did appear
To him of Nuremberg, who fashioned here
For time this emblem of the mystery
Of life and death, of human hope and fear—
Take, then, this garland that I weave for thee,
O Maiden stern, O sad, O strange Meláneholie !

1892.

SONG

SWIFT flow the hours, years glide away,
Love we a little while we may ;
Kiss me, and clasp me to your heart,
Soon knells the hour when we must part.

Nay, look not sad, the stars may set
In dim eclipse, I 'll love thee yet,
And earth be riven to its core,
My love shall live to love thee more.

THE CAVALIER OVER HIS BOTTLE

(From the French of Mr. Walter Pollock)

CHILLED and frozen is my heart
By the frost of thy disdain,
But good wine shall yet impart
Mirth to banish grief and pain.

As I pour the ruby flood,
As it sparkles rich and rare,
As it mantles in my blood,
Wings it lends to my despair.

In this lustrous pool I find
Love secure from rude alarms,
Love more true, and friend more kind,
Than abides in all thy charms.

NIGHT PIECE

CROWN the bowl and wreath the brow,
Roses bring and rosemary,
Now the hour invites, and now
Phœbus sinks beneath the sea.

Soon upon the dewy lawn,
Gleaming in the moon's soft eye,
Nymphs, with many a woodland faun,
Troop in gentle revelry.

Now for all let Love's clear star
Hold sweet influence through the night,
Till the Dawn, with rushing car,
Puts the stars again to flight.

VERSES FOR AN OPERETTA

LOVE me for ever, let your true love be
Deep in your heart as the depths of the sea,
Love me for ever, though the world grow cold,
Love me for ever, as you loved me, love, of old.

Love me for ever, with your white arms thrown
Thus round my neck, love, thou art my very own,
Mine thy sweet lips and the breath of thy kiss,
Mine the blue heaven of thine eyes and its bliss.

Love me for ever, though the stars grow pale,
Love me for ever, though the daylight fail,
Ah, now, my own love, my own old love and true.
Love me for ever, my sweet love, as I love you.

MY LADY'S HAIR

(To a painter)

If you would paint my lady's hair,
Go, bid your faithful Ariel bring
The blackness from the raven's wing,
The lustre from the ebon rare.

Mix those together, still you 'll fail,
Unless the night, her aid to lend,
Implored at darkest hour, will send
A shadow from the sleeping dale.

1892.

A SUMMER IDYL

SEE where the moon
Rides in the azure blue,
The delicate, shy moon,
A waif of down upon a summer sea,
While the long, golden afternoon
Slopes slowly westward, lengthening every tree
Upon the sward, where full-breathed cattle feed
Through all the flowery mead.

Now sinks the sun
Adown the flaming west,
And, one by one,
Stars open winking eyes that hid their light,
Whilst owls and flitting things, that shun
The 'garish day, come forth to greet the night,
Which, now the tale of one more day is told,
Steals over field and fold.

1895.

THE SCULPTOR AND THE FROG

(After the Greek)

So there !
You little hopping frog,
Most worshipful and timely frog,
As I have fashioned thee
With curious and loving care,
Sit there !

For thus to thee
Small service would I pay,
In that one summer day,
Forth from your hollow throat
A guiding note,
Small minstrel whom the nymphs delight to own,

Showed me the water hidden in a bower,
Where amid grasses' sheen,
And many a furtive flower,
With cool, sleek bulbous things,
Discreetly squatting on a couch of green
You lay. The runlet sings
Yet in my ears, where I
Slaked my fell thirst, and so
Along the road did go.

A FRAGMENT

STIRS the faint air, its languors fail,
Dawn cools the fevered brow of night,
And in its chaste enfolding light
The fires of passion sink and pale.

And as the waning shadows creep
Down hill and vale, from pearly skies
Softly descend on lovers' eyes
The deep refreshing dews of sleep.

NOVEMBER MORNING

ALL night upon the silent land
The frost had laid his iron hold,
Like fingers of a dead man's hand,
The pale ice gathered, wan and cold.

Up rose the mighty sun, and hurled
Through copse and glade his shafts of light,
And through her tears a smiling world
Knew the glad day had banished night.

THOUGHTS

O LOVELY hair,
O youthful grace,
O laughter rare,
O sweet embrace !

O madcap glee,
Careless of time,
Light hearts and free,
O youth sublime !

O sullen brow,
O brooding pain,
O true love's vow,
Renewed again !

And oh, the sighs,
The secret tears,
For memories
Across the years !

A FISHING BALLAD

THE worms were dug, the baskets slung,
With farewells holloa'd after,
We hied us o'er the dewy fields,
To chatter, jest, and laughter.

Up the long hedge, over the hill,
And past the fox's burrow,
Across the brook and down the vale,
Three miles of ridge and furrow.

The ponds were reached, I took the creek,
Two rods in order laid,
While Daisy dropped a cautious line
Beneath a hazel shade.

In silence grim we sat and watched
Our floats, respectively,
And now the sun had passed its noon,
And ne'er a bite had we.

No sound there was or sign of life,
The drowsy pool to trouble,
But here and there a furtive suck,
And here and there a bubble.

And sometimes from the farther shore
A moor-fowl sent a call,
And then a crazy little leaf
Into the pond would fall.

Our rods lay propped upon the bank,
We were half sleeping, when
Slowly and softly Daisy's line
Began to move, and then

Down rushed the float, the float went down,
It was a mighty fish,
As ever lords and ladies saw
Set out upon a dish.

' Hold, Daisy, hold ! ' ' Come quick,' she cried,
' How hu-ge it seems to feel ! '
When up there came a bunch of weeds,
And, at the end, an eel.

The sun was sunk, a rising moon
Made shift its light to borrow,
As home we trudged, and counted o'er
The fish we 'd catch to-morrow.

SONG

WHAT were those kisses—did they fall
Like dew to cheer the sod withal ;
Or like the flood which bursts amain,
After long-gathered stress of rain ?

What were those kisses—did they seal
A hoarded troth, for time to steal ;
Or were they minions of the eye,
To serve the sprite of raillery ?

Or, for a heart's undying flame,
Were they the ministers that came,
From poppy-crimson lips to press
The languors of forgetfulness ?

ART

CURSED be Art, and all its poisoned dream,
Blown rank upon the world from that dark fen
Of fevered phantasies which wretched men
Woo to their evil—phantasies that teem
More with our growing. Yet in sooth they seem
Fair in the wooing, fraught with strange delight,
As of a parted darkness in the night
Of things invisible, a transient gleam
Of perfect beauty. Nay, a wavering fire,
Which men, though wisdom flout, and reason call,
Through dim, delirious dreams of dark desire,
And darker madness, follow, till they fall,
Fester and rot, and, festering, foully breed
Ills which the world may yet do well to heed.

1895.

HUMAN LIFE

To part ! O bitter cry ! O word forlorn
To aching human hearts, which still must bear
The lonely heritage that none may share
Of each life's being ! Naught that has been borne,
Fire, sword, and famine, whatsoc'er hath torn
The much enduring ages, can compare
With that great sorrow which the common air
Gathers in sighs from lips of men upborne.
A little life, a little weaving in
Of fellowship of life—a smile, a tear,
Hope, joy and sorrow, love of friend and kin—
The pattern grows ! And then, methinks, in dreams,
Above the humming of the loom we hear
Only the rending of the ravelled seams.

1896.

EN ROUTE

O YE bereft, whom Time and that decrec,
Which girds about the course of human things,
Have brought through baffling dreams and joys that
flee,

To that estate where slow experience brings
The knowledge of those gifts, which, being pressed
Erewhile to dainty lips, were put aside
Through pride of choiceness—how are ye possessed
With hunger for the feast, which, once denied,
Is ne'er recaptured ! Dreams of golden hours,
Phantoms of beauty, pain of alien bliss,
Haunt your awakening and lay waste your powers,
While others seem to win what you still miss—
Vain effort ! vain desires ! as wise men know,
Who find in stress of life release from woe.

1897.

REGRET

I wove a garland for the head of sin,
Roses for blushes, violets for tears,
With lilies pale for passion, and the fears
Which followed breathless at the entering in,
Where beauty, which desire was fain to win,
Passed and repassed for pleasure. But the years,
And that stern fate remorseless with the shears,
Have laid my garden bare, and I begin
Still where I needs must end, and wondering ask
Of unresponsive skies and earth's wide waste
What was my purpose hither, and alone
Where hence my journey, or if all this task
Of living ends where to the grave I haste,
And if regret may for the past atone.

NOCTURNE

O DARKENED earth, and thou great void of heaven,
And still procession of unnumbered stars,
Pale ministers of fate, I would invoke you,
But that I know you blind and senseless things,
Dumb, driven idols, whether from the womb
Of chaos forming, or from fiery change
Emergent on the realms of space you come.
'Tis of my soul, set in these bands of clay,
Which, like yourselves, compounded are of dust,
That, moving through the sheer and dreadful void,
You move harmonious, and unconscious keep
For consciousness the secret things of God.

Say, ye blue depths, wherein the great earth rolls
Her measured orbit, to what shores are borne
Her cries, her ancient prayers ? to what far haven,
O'er all that infinite and soundless sea,
The flotsam of her sighs ? Back on itself,
Even in the asking, comes the idle word,
Like a child's bolt, that 's spent while it cries 'Oh !'
And, lo, a voice, a still heart-searching sense :
' This the eternal, these the signs vouchsafed
Of the soul's proper state, which, lest she pine
In fleshly durance, she may still discern
Through ministry of eyes, as, inly rapt,
She meditates the dream of her desire.'
Shine on, ye stars ! ye still must bear your part—
The oracles of God are in the heart.

1898.

THE ECSTASY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, WITH HIS MOTHER MONNICA

(Adapted from the 'Confessions')

Now we together, at a window set
Which opened on a garden, she and I,
Held sweet communion ; and in spirit bending
Our intense flight into that world beyond
As 'twere the uttermost heaven, from sense caught up,
As toward those mysteries we strained in thought,
Thus we made utterance :—

If, for such an one,

Hushed were the tumult of the flesh awhile,
Hushed sounds of earth and sea, hushed too all sights,
'Transitions, shows, forms and embodiments,
Hushed were the poles of heaven, and the soul,
Hushed to herself, were of herself oblivious :
If, at that moment, the still soul might come
To the near presence and the ineffable
Percipience of the Eternal, and receive
Of rapture streaming from the very face
Of Truth and Wisdom : if, in that same hour,
Hushed were all visions, hushed each floating dream,
'Gendered of shapes which, had we ears, would say,
' We are but phantoms of the things that flee,
By Him created who abideth still

Changeless amid the tide of things which change' :
Were these too hushed, our ears by them attuned
To Him who made them ; if then in the hush
Of that great silence He alone might speak,
Not through those voices, nor by any tongue
Of men or angel, but if we might hear
His Word, His very self whom our heart loveth,
Through these, the dim similitude of Him
We still desire, though we attain Him not :
If this alone might be continued on,
All else excluding, and that only Presence
Ravish the spirit and drink up the soul
Of the beholder into its excess
And fulness of fruition, so that thenceforth
That momentary illumination
Of divine understanding might remain,
And be our life for ever—what were this,
But ' Enter thou into thy Master's joy ' ?

1898.

A DIALOGUE OF TO-DAY

VIATOR. In pleasure, then, you find the goal,
To which intends the human soul ?

FABIANUS. The gospel of the Social Movement
Lies in material improvement,
Obedience to the laws of health,
A just apportionment of wealth,
That all may have sufficient leisure
Ensured for intellectual pleasure,
And breathe the air and see the sun
After the day's light task is done.

VIATOR. In men at large do you then find
A wish to cultivate the mind
Apart from profit and the power
Which knowledge brings ?

FABIANUS. Good sir, the flower
Succeeds the bud. Enough if we
Discern the latter.

VIATOR. I agree,
If it be there. And yet in this
Picture of yours I seem to miss
Something desired by men who trod
The earth before which they called ' God.'

FABIANUS. Expressing by that simple plan
The dignity they found in Man.

VIATOR. It may be so ; and yet I see
Things which impair that dignity ;
Life's shattered hopes and efforts vain,
The old indignity of pain,
Misfortune starving on a dole,

The body that affronts the soul,
The clouded mind, shot with the gleam,
At best, of youth's mistaken dream,
The bursting cough, the drivelling rheum,
Precursors of the mouldering tomb,
The groan, the rattle of expiring breath,
And all the gaunt moek-majesty of death.

FABIANUS. Nay but, good sir, that bolt is spent,
Heroics are not argument.

VIATOR. I state but facts ?

FABIANUS. Well ?

VIATOR. Perhaps you 'll say

If it's for this we make our way
Through life's entanglements, for this
The young man's dream, the lover's kiss ;
Th' emprise that little reeks of pain,
Steeled by the old ' renounce ' ' refrain ' ;
For this from women's eyes doth shine
The pity which men call divine ;
For this the hopes, for this the fears
Of human hearts, for this the tears ;
The gossamer with vapour strung
For this, for this the heavens are hung
With morning bright and evening grey,
That every dog may have his day ?

Or add—to take, perhaps, a page
From annals of an elder age—
The saint's despair, the sense of sin,
The shame, the agony within,
Pride and the sudden inward flare,
Which naked shows the soul and bare,
Revealing all her earthly dress
But as the rags of rottenness.

See nature, like a harlot quean,
Turn to what is from what has been,
And still with new-old art prepare
Her favours for her latest care.
Here what he was the man may see
In what he nevermore can be,
And what he was disdain to scan
In him the future of the man.
Here——

FABIANUS. Surely, sir, you 're not *au fait*
With the new thinkers of to-day—

VIATOR. Tell me, do they maintain the heart
May find its *point d'appui* in Art?

FABIANUS. Or with the faith which sees the birth
Of a new heaven on this our earth;
Pain minimised——

VIATOR. Through tortured frogs,
And pricked out nerves of cats and dogs.

FABIANUS. Know, friend, all creatures, in their place,
Subserve the progress of the Race,
Which, with new hopes and brow elate,
Moves onwards to a happier state,
When poverty and crime shall be
Things of the past, and misery
Banished by equal laws, and man——

VIATOR. Whose days, 'tis writ, are but a span.

FABIANUS. Content shall take his rightful place
In the new triumphs of the Race;
When Youth shall laugh, and Age shall sing,
And Life bloom forth, a lovelier thing,
In fairer minds, manners more polished—

VIATOR. After the House of Lords has been abolished.

1898.

A HARD SAYING

Love not the world—when thou art gone,
The sun will shine as it has shone,
And joys, like thine, withhold, no less,
The secret of their nothingness.

Love not the world—Youth's blazoned page
Grows dim, as erst, to eyes of Age,
Save the old saw that all things must
Still food provide for moth and rust.

Love not the world—the message stern
Stands now, as then, for men to learn,
A saying hard, a riddle grand,
And so from age to age will stand.

1898.

PART II
TRANSLATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS
1891-1896

FROM, OR AFTER HORACE

AN INVOCATION

CARM. I. XXX.

O Venus, regina, etc.

O VENUS, queen of many a sunny isle,
Leave thy loved Cyprus, and across the sea
Come hither to my Glycera's fair bower,
Who summons thee

With wealth of incense. Come, and with thee bring
Thy glowing Boy, nor let the Nymphs delay ;
Youth too, love-longing, and the Graces three
Bid come away !

HORACE

CARM. I. V

AD PYRRHAM

QUIS multa gracilis te puer in rosa
Perfusus liquidis urget odoribus
Grato, Pyrrha, sub antro ?
Cui flavam religas comam,
Simplex munditiis ? Heu quoties fidem
Mutatosque deos flebit et aspera
Nigris aequora ventis
Emirabitur insolens ;
Qui nunc te fruitur credulus aurea,
Qui semper vacuum, semper amabilem
Sperat, nescius aurae
Fallacis. Miseri quibus
Intentata nites ! Me tabula sacer
Votiva paries indicat uvida
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris deo.

PYRRHA

WHAT slender youth, on scattered roses lying,
Woos thee, fair Pyrrha, in some cool sequestered place ?
For whom bind'st thou thy yellow hair
With artless grace ?

Ah, hapless boy ! how soon, how soon to tears
Will his young golden dream be turned, when clouds
arise
On that bright sea, and changèd gods
Avert their eyes !

Who now has all thy love, nor dreams that thou
Couldst change, couldst ever cease to love him, or
the day
Could come when love and faith would fail—
Ah, wretched they,

For whom thy beauty shines ! My dripping weeds,
Hung on great Neptune's votive wall, proclaim for me
To all, how I erewhile escaped
That cruel sea.

HORACE

CARM. III. XVIII

AD FAUNUM

FAUNE, Nympharum fugientum amator,
Per meos fines et aprica rura
Lenis incedas abeasque parvis
 Aequus alumnis,
Si tener pleno cadit haedus anno,
Larga nec desunt Veneris sodali
Vina craterae. Vetus ara multo
 Fumat odore,
Ludit herboso pecus omne campo,
Cum tibi Nonae redeunt Decembres ;
Festus in pratis vacat otioso
 Cum bove pagus ;
Inter audaces lupus errat agnos ;
Spargit agrestis tibi silva frondes ;
Gaudet invisam pepulisse fossor
 Ter pede terram.

THE FAUN

FAUNUS, thou lover of the Nymphs that fly,
If through my sunny fields thou chance to pass,
Kind be thy coming and thy footing light
 Upon the grass.

And, when thou goest, may my young weanlings feel
No harmful influence, if, when droops the year,
A kid falls to thee and full stoups of wine—
 Such loving cheer

Bright Venus chooseth. From yon antique mound
My rustic altar smokes with fragrance sweet,
While beasts do leap upon the verdant sward,
 When seasons meet

'Twixt drouth and winter. Then, in joy of thee,
The village hind with herds makes holiday
Through all the meadows, and the wolf is seen
 With lambs at play.

Then, in thy path, the wildwood strews her leaves,
To grace thy coming ; while, with shouts of mirth,
The ploughman tramples in the three-time dance
 His foe, the earth.

HORACE

CARM. IV. III

AD MELPOMENEN

QUEM tu, Melpomene, semel
Nascentem placido lumine videris,
Illum non labor Isthmius
Clarabit pugilem, non equus impiger
Curru ducet Achaico
Victorem, neque res bellica Deliis
Ornatum foliis ducem,
Quod regum tumidas contuderit minas,
Ostendet Capitolio :
Sed quae Tibur aquae fertile praefluunt
Et spissae nemorum comae
Fingent Aeolio carmine nobilem.
Romae principis urbium
Dignatur suboles inter amabiles
Vatum ponere me choros,
Et jam dente minus mordeor invido.
O, testudinis aureae
Dulem quae strepitum, Pieri, temperas,
O mutis quoque piscibus
Donatura cycni, si libeat, sonum,
Totum muneris hoc tui est,
Quod monstror digito praetereuntium
Romanae fidicen lyrae,
Quod spiro et placeo, si placeo, tuum est.

A POET'S FAME

THE man upon whose cradled state
Your eyes have turned their quiet gaze,
Melpomene, he needs no praise
From Isthmian toils, to make him great.

For him no shouts the air shall fill
For victories won in chariot race,
Nor kings be captive led to grace
His triumph up the Sacred Hill.

But streams, which Tibur's woods among
Flow gently on, shall nurse his fame,
And rear throughout the world his name
As master of Aeolian song.

Lords of the earth, the sons of Rome
Have deigned to set me up on high,
Amid the gracious company
Of bards, where Envy cannot come.

O goddess of the golden lyre !
Queen of the dulcet-sounding shell !
Who, with sweet song's enthralling spell,
Could fishes mute, like swans, inspire !

If I am praised, by nod and sign
If men do mark me through the town,
My powers, my all—art, life, renown—
Are but thy gift—the praise be thine !

HORACE

CARM. IV. VII

AD TORQUATUM

DIFFUGERE nives, redeunt jam gramina campis
Arboribusque comae :
Mutat terra vices et decrescentia ripas
Flumina praetereunt ;
Gratia cum Nymphis geminisque sororibus audet
Ducere nuda choros.
Immortalia ne speres monet annus et alium
Quae rapit hora diem.
Frigora mitescunt Zephyris, ver proterit aestas
Interitura simul
Pomifer Auctumnus fruges effuderit, et mox
Bruma recurrit iners.
Damna tamen celeres reparant caelestia lunae :
Nos, ubi decidimus,
Quo pius Aeneas quo dives Tullus et Ancus,
Pulvis et umbra sumus.
Quis scit an adjeiciant hodiernae crastina summae
Tempora di superi ?
Cuncta manus avidas fugient heredis amico
Quae dederis animo.
Cum semel occideris et de te splendida Minos
Fecerit arbitria,
Non, Torquate, genus, non te facundia, non te
Restituet pietas ;
Infernis neque enim tenebris Diana pudicum
Liberat Hippolytum,
Nec Lethaea valet Theseus abrumpere caro
Vincula Pirithoo.

AN EARLY SPRING DAY

GONE is the snow, and the first tender green
O'er field and wood is seen ;
The earth is changed again, and rivers flow
Between the banks they know.
Now, on the dewy sward, with motion free,
Dance Nymphs and Graces three,
While winds are hushed, and tender suns caress
Their naked comeliness.
That in thy heart no idle hope should be
Of immortality,
The year reminds us, and this golden day,
Which the hours steal away.
At Spring's behest the balmy Zephyr blows,
Then melt the winter snows,
But Spring to Summer yields, himself to bow,
Though lordly be his brow,
To Autumn, bringing fruits—and soon again
Winter renews his reign.
What though the moon's increase keeps coming on,
Yet we, when we are gone,
Where all the mighty dead have gone before,
Are dust and nothing more.
Whether the gods will add to our to-day
To-morrow, who shall say ?
Give while you can, and save from what your heirs
Already grasp as theirs ;
For when the lord of that dim shadowy throne
Has claimed thee for his own,
Nor birth, nor piety, nor eloquence,
Friend, shall restore thee thence,
Where gods, for those they loved, have sought in vain
To loose death's fatal chain.

‘ O NAVIS ’

After Horace, CARM. I. XIV

O THOU who far upon a summer sea
Spreadest white canvas to the favouring air,
Glad in thy proud convoying company
Of statelier craft—take heed ! Though thou art fair,
And bravely leanest to the flowing blue,
Yet waters are there, under other skies,
Where storms are sudden and where stars are few.
Ah ! when frail timbers rend and cordage flies,
’Mid the loud buffets of that boisterous world,
How wilt thou fare ? Were it not better far
To seek the port, and there, with sails close furled,
To hear the wild waves rage across the bar,
Thy little barque secure, ere the night fall,
With none on the lone waste to hear thee call ?

BY THE WAY

After Horace, CARM. I. XXXIV

*Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiae*

*Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
Vela dare atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos . . .*

I, who for many years had ceased
To go to church, or say my prayers,
Making Philosophy my priest,
Till, tangled in the mazy snares
Of puzzle-headed Wisdom's saws,
I 'gan to wonder where I was ;

Casting about in witless wise,
I, one fine day—the world may smile,
But there it was—I rubbed my eyes,
And saw that, had I walked a mile
By the old road, I 'd better done
Than twenty by the way I 'd come.

So, musing to myself, I said
' I 've been a fool '—and back I ran ;
And, as the ancient way I tread,
' A sadder and a wiser man,'
I recognise there 's still some knowledge
We may acquire when we 've left college.

A MAN'S LOVE

After Horace, CARM. IV. 1., Intermissa, Venus, diu, etc.

SPARE me, O goddess, spare !
Thy cruel dart
Hath piercèd through my heart,
While she so fair
Goes careless still and gay ; yet my heart's woe
I swear, great goddess, she shall never know.

Her beauty, formed by thee
For love's delight,
Dazzles my aching sight ;
I would be free ;
But when in angry shame to 'scape I try,
She holds me in the fetters of her eye.

Capricious fate and blind,
I laugh at thee !
And yet I am not free,
Nor is she kind.
Nay, goddess, then, unloose these galling chains,
So tedious grown, and ease me of my pains.

Go where some ardent boy
Sighs to the air,
And summons thee with prayer
To crown his joy ;
Go conquer hearts which have not felt thy sway,
Mine is grown hard, and likes not to obey.

‘ PERSICOS ODI ’

(The last English country-gentleman addresses his man.)

I DO not like your Jewish tastes,
I hate your furs and astrakan,
Melton and velvet 's good enough,
Or was, to coat a gentleman.

You need not trouble to enquire
What is the latest sort of hat,
Chapman and Moore have got my size,
And yours, and can attend to that.

FIVE TRANSLATIONS FROM CATULLUS

CATULLUS

V

VIVAMUS, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
Rumoresque senum severiorum
Omnes unius aestimemus assis.
Soles occidere et redire possunt :
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.
Da mi basia mille, deinde centum,
Dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
Deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.
Dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
Conturbabimus illa, ne seiamus,
Aut ne quis malus invidere possit,
Cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.

TO LESBIA

My Lesbia, let us live and love,
And though censorious age reprove,
Let us not heed it. Suns can set
And rise again. Not so doth let
Fate burn our little lamp, which must,
Once quenched, lie darkened in the dust.
Then kiss me, love—ah, while we live,
A thousand kisses to me give ;
Kiss me, and from that honeyed store
Of kisses bring a hundred more ;
A thousand kisses add to these,
And then a thousand more, nor cease
Till all the reckoning of our bliss
Is blotted out in kiss on kiss,
And envious wight may never see
The kisses thou didst give to me.

CATULLUS

III

LUGETE, o Veneres Cupidinesque,
Et quantum est hominum venustiorum.
Passer mortuus est meae puellae,
Passer, deliciae meae puellae ;
Quem plus illa oculis suis amabat :
Nam mellitus erat suamque norat
Ipsam tam bene quam puella matrem ;
Nec sese a gremio illius movebat,
Sed circumsiliens modo huc modo illuc
Ad solam dominam usque pipilabat.
Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum
Illuc, unde negant redire quenquam.
At vobis male sit, malae tenebrae
Orci, quae omnia bella devoratis :
Tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis.
Vae factum male ! vae miselle passer !
Tua nunc opera meae puellae
Flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.

THE DEAD SPARROW

MOURN, all ye Loves, ye Loves and Cupids, mourn,
Make moan for heaviness, ye gallants bright,
Her sparrow dead my Lesbia weeps forlorn ;
He 's dead—poor, pretty bird—my love's delight !

Ah, honey-sweet he was ! when she addressed
Him loving things, he 'd answer at her ear,
And perch about her, flutter at her breast,
And pipe and chirrup to his mistress dear.

No hand but hers he loved, no other call
He heeded : now, his pretty doings o'er,
His little soul goes darkling whither all
Must go, and, going, may return no more.

Then out, alack ! and fie upon your spite,
Ye sullen shadows of the insatiate grave !
Devouring all that 's beautiful and bright—
Out on ye !—all the lovely things we have !

And now my mistress weeps, and 'tis your work
That red and swollen are her tender eyes.
O hapless bird ! O dull, devouring murk !
Her bird is dead, and my poor Lesbia cries.

CATULLUS

XXXI

PAENE insularum, Sirmio, insularumque
Ocelle, quascunque in liquentibus stagnis
Marique vasto fert uterque Neptunus ;
Quam te libenter quamque lactus inviso,

Vix mi ipse credens Thuniam atque Bithunos
Liquisse campos et videre te in tuto.
O quid solutis est beatius euris ?
Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
Labore fessi venimus larem ad nostrum,
Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto.
Hoc est quod unum est pro laboribus tantis.

Salve o venusta Sirmio atque hero gaude ;
Gaudete vosque o Lydiae lacus undae ;
Ridete quidquid est domi cachinnorum.

SIRMIO¹

O SIRMIO ! fairest jewel in mine eyes,
Of all the headlands that the sea runs round,
Or sweet lakes bosom—how my heart doth bound,
To see again thy lawns and woodlands rise

Upon my vision ! After all my toil
In foreign lands—Bithynia's sultry plain
Searce left—to think, O joy ! that once again
I should be here upon my native soil.

At ease ! O guerdon sweet ! when, after wars,
With journeyings and vigils sore bestead,
Our own old home we come to, and the bed
So often longed for under alien stars.

This is the recompense for all our pain ;
Here may the mind lay by its load of care ;
Search the world over, nothing can compare
With what we feel in coming home again.

Hail, lovely Sirmio ! and do thou rejoice
To greet thy master and his happy chance.
Ye Tuscan waves, with all your ripples dance !
And laugh, old home, with every heart and voice !

¹ Sirmione, on Lago di Garda.

CATULLUS

LXXVI

Siqua recordanti benefacta priora voluptas
Est homini, cum se cogitat esse pium,
Nec sanctam violasse fidem, nec foedere in ullo
Divum ad fallendos numine abusum homines,
Multa parata manent jam in longa aetate,
Catulle,
Ex hoc ingrato gaudia amore tibi.
Nam quaecumque homines bene cuiquam aut
dicere possunt
Aut facere, haec a te dictaque factaque sunt ;
Omnia quae ingratae perierunt credita menti.
Quare jam te cur amplius exerucies ?
Quin tu animo offirmas atque istinc te ipse
reducis,
Et dis invitis desinis esse miser ?
Difficile est longum subito deponere amorem.
Difficile est, verum hoc qua lubet efficias :
Una salus haec est, hoc est tibi pervincendum,
Hoc facias, sive id non pote sive pote.
O di, si vestrum est misereri, aut si quibus
unquam
Extremam iam ipsa in morte tulistis opem,
Me miserum aspiciate et, si vitam puriter
egi,
Eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi.

SOLILOQUY

If to a man the reckoning o'er
Of gentle deeds may pleasure give,
Of that, methinks, there lies in store
Enough to last me while I live.

If honest vows, faith without stain,
Life lavished, love without repine,
Have savour sweet, there should remain
Sweet from this bitter love of mine.

What was undone that love could do ?
What was unsaid that love could say ?
Perish regret ! nor still renew
The worthless story of a day.

Worthless and heartless ! let it go.
Ah ! why should anguish count again—
When strength could give release from woe—
The bitter reckoning of her pain ?

'Tis hard to lay aside at will
The love of years,—and yet, I trow,
What men erewhile have borne may still
Be borne, though hard, and shall be now.

Borne, ay, and done—done, whatsoe'er
The pain of doing. Here, for me,
Lies the sole refuge from despair,
And end of all this misery.

Heu ! mihi surrepens imos ut torpor in artus
Expulit ex omni pectore laetities !
Non iam illud quaero, contra ut me diligat illa,
Aut, quod non potis est, esse pudica velit :
Ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere
morbum.
O di, reddite mi hoc pro pietate mea.

Oh, but in pity—if for pain
Pity may touch immortal minds—
Grant me, kind Heavens, to win again
Ease from this wasting woe, which winds

Its chain about me. Grant but this,
If recompense for faith be due,
Only to know again the bliss
Of healthful days, which once I knew.

Not that she love me, or forbear
Of shame the brimming cup to fill—
Black ne'er was white, foul is not fair,
And filthy will be filthy still.

I ask not that—that ne'er can be—
Enough if, while the years remain,
I may look up and know me free
To live, and to be well again.

CATULLUS

CI

MULTAS per gentes et multa per aequora vectus
Advenio has miseras, frater, ad inferias,
Ut te postremo donarem munere mortis
Et mutam nequiequam alloquerer cinerem.
Quandoquidem fortuna mihi tete abstulit ipsum,
Heu miser indigne frater adempte mihi,
Nunc tamen interea haec priseo quae more parentum
Tradita sunt tristes munera ad inferias,
Accipe fraterno multum manantia fletu,
Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale.

AT A BROTHER'S GRAVE

HOMEWARDS, a traveller, from many lands returning,
I greet thee, brother, only at thy grave,
To thy dumb ashes telling o'er, in accents burning,
Those rites, 'tis said, departed spirits crave.

All that I can—with tears—the words our fathers
taught us—

Then, if the dead may hear us from the shore
Of their departing o'er those sad and lonely waters,
Hearken—and fare thee well for evermore.

THREE TRANSLATIONS FROM SAPPHO

SAPPHO

Φαίνεται μοι κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν
ἔμμεν ὠνήρ, ὅστις ἐναντίος τοι
ἰζάνει, καὶ πλασίον ἄδῃ φωνεύ-
σας ὑπακούει
καὶ γελαίσας ἡμερόεν, τό μοι μάν
καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόασεν·
ὥς γὰρ εὐίδον βροχέως σε, φωνὰς
οὐδὲν ἔτ' εἴκει·
ἀλλὰ καὶ μὲν γλῶσσα ἔαγε, λέπτον δ'
αὐτίκα χρῶ πῦρ ὑποδεδρόμακεν,
ὀππάτεσσι δ' οὐδὲν ὄρημ', ἐπιρρόμ-
βεισι δ' ἄκουαι.
ἀ δέ μ' ἱδρῶς κακχέεται, τρόμος δὲ
πᾶσαν ἄγρει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας
ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω 'πιδεύης
φαίνομαι . . .

PEER OF THE GODS

PEER of the gods he seems to me,
The man who, sitting, faces thee,
And listens, where thou hast thy seat,
To thy soft voice and laughter sweet ;
Which leave me breathless—for, if I
But see thee, all my senses fly ;
Words fail me, and, bereft of sound,
In sudden bands my tongue is bound ;
About my flesh, through that desire,
Courses a subtle, searching fire,
Nothing I see, with horrid din
My throbbing ears resound within,
The dews of passion drench my brow
And all my trembling body now,
Paler than leaf of aspen grown,
Like one from whom all life has flown.

SAPPHO

Ποικιλόθρον', ἀθανάτ' Ἀφροδίτα,
παῖ Δίος, δολόπλοκε, λίσσομαί σε,
μή μ' ἄσασι μήτ' ὀνίαισι δάμνα,
πότνια, θῦμον·

ἀλλὰ τυιδ' ἔλθ', αἵποτα κατέρωτα
τᾶς ἑμας αὔδως αἰτοῖσα πήλυι
ἔκλυες, πάτρος δὲ δόμον λίποισα
χρύσιον ἦλθες

ἄρμ' ὑποζεύξαισα· κάλοι δέ σ' ἄγον
ῥέεες στρουῦθαι περὶ γᾶς μελαίνας
πύκνα δινεῦντες πτέρ' ἀπ' ὥράνω αἰθέ-
ρος διὰ μέσσω.

αἶψα δ' ἐξίκοντο· τὸ δ', ὦ μάκαιρα,
μειδιάσαισ' ἀθανάτῃ προσώπῳ,
ἦρε', ὅττι δηῦτε πέπονθα κῶττι
δηῦτε κάλημι.

INVOCATION TO APHRODITE

GODDESS immortal ! from thy throne afar
If ever thou didst heed thy suppliant's cry,
And on her plaintive sorrowings didst turn
 A pitying eye ;

Hear me, and hither, from thy bright abode,
Let the faint longings of my eager string
Draw thee, and win thee, lady, for my heart
 Some balm to bring.

Not in thy terrors, not in all thy power,
For awful art thou whom all things obey,
Clothed in all colours, heart and throne alike,
 Of Night and Day ;

But hither come, as when, in gentle state,
Thy team of sparrows drew thy glittering car
Round the dark earth, with frequent fluttering wings,
 From heaven afar.

Quickly they came ; and thou, O blissful one !
Bending upon me those immortal eyes,
Didst smile, and ask me why I called, and why
 Those tears and sighs ?

κοῦτ' ἔμφ' μάλιστα θέλω γενέσθαι
μαινόλα θύμῳ· τίνα δηῦτε Πείθω
μαῖς ἄγην ἐς σὰν φιλότατα, τίς σ', ὦ
Ψάπφ', ἀδικήει;

καὶ γὰρ αἰ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει
αἰ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ', ἀλλὰ δώσει,
αἰ δὲ μὴ φιλεῖ, ταχέως φιλήσει
κωὺκ ἐθέλοισα.

ἔλθε μοι καὶ νῦν. χαλεπᾶν δὲ λύσον
ἐκ μεριμνᾶν, ὅσσα δέ μοι τέλεσσαι
θῦμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον· σὺ δ' αὐτὰ
σύμμαχος ἔσσο.

And what it was that this poor heart of mine,
Distracted thus, did most desire to be—
'Whom lov'st thou, Sappho? Who, to love unkind,
Is wronging thee?

For though she fly thee, yet shall she pursue,
And, for those gifts her coldness doth deride,
She shall bring others, ay, and love for love,
For all her pride.'

Come then in such wise, and, if ere thine ear
Leaned to the soft complainings of my lyre,
Fulfil my longing, and achieve me all
My heart's desire!

ANOTHER VERSION OF THE SAME

(In the original metre.)

DÆDAL-THRONED, immortal Aphrodite,
Child of Zeus, guile-weaving, I beseech thee,
Spare with thy pains, great mistress, or with sorrows
Now to subdue me.

But at my call come hither, come, if ever
Hearing afar my voice thou didst heed it, and
Leave thy home, the house of thy father,
Yoking the golden ¹

Car for thy journey. Beauteous they drew thee,
Sparrows with wings fast beating through the midmost
Air round the dark earth, beating to bring thee
Here from the heaven.

Quickly they came ; and thou, O divine one,
Smiling with face immortal upon me,
Asked what ailed me, asked me the cause that
Hither I had called thee.

¹ The epithet in the original presumably belongs to 'house,' but it has been transposed in the translation, partly for the sake of the rhythm, partly because a 'golden house' has no poetical significance in English.

What in my passionate heart did I long for ?
' Who, unkind to thy love, now drawing thee,
Holds thee at will ? Who, cold to persuasion,
Sappho, doth wrong thee ?

' For, though she fly thee, soon shall she pursue thee,
And for gifts spurned gifts yet shall she bring thee,
Ay, if she loves not, soon shall she love, though
Even she wills not.'

Come so now to me, come and release me
Out of the chains of sorrows distressful ;
What I desire bring about, in my battle
Stand thou beside me.

1914.

MISCELLANEOUS

AN EPITAPH

(After the Greek, οὐκ ἔθaves Πρώτη.)

Al! tell us not that in the grave,
A bride of Death, our darling lies ;
Far out beyond the western wave
To fairer fields her spirit hies.

A blessed company she knows,
With brave delights her heart is glad,
There where the lily and the rose
Fade not, nor cometh aught that 's sad,

Or evil. There no winter's rage
Harms her, for her heat scorcheth not,
Hunger and thirst, decay and age,
Sorrow and pain are all forgot.

Of human love she needs no store,
A better lot to her is given,
Who without blame for evermore
Dwells in the holy light of heaven.

THE OLD GUIDE

(As a Greek might have written it.)

OLD Hans, who finds his day is done,
And that no more the heights he 'll scale,
That walking now where others run,
His feet must linger in the vale,

His lantern, satchel, pic,¹ and ropes
Has hung upon a votive wall,
And down the last descent he hopes
To find his way without a fall.

¹ Ice-axe.

SIMONIDES OF AMORGOS ¹ ON WOMEN

THE words of Simonides, the son of Crines, which he spake.

Manifold is the heart of woman, and of diverse things was it fashioned in the beginning.

There is a woman who hath her nature from the sea, and twofold is the fashion thereof.

One day she is full of laughter, and gladness possesseth her spirit ;

They who behold her commend her ; she hath praise from the stranger within her gates.

There is no woman more pleasant than she is, nor fairer among the daughters of women.

But another day who verily may endure her ? Go not nigh unto her then ; look not upon her with thine eyes ;

For, as the she-wolf about her cubs, so she rageth ; yea, hateful is she and grievous to her friends and to her enemies alike.

So is it with the sea, which oftentimes is calm and untroubled,

In the time of summer, when sailors have pleasure therein ;

But oftentimes it is driven by tempests, yea the waters thereof rage and swell ;

¹ Seventh century B.C.

When the storm cometh down upon the deep ; every wave roareth after his fellow.

Like unto the sea is the heart of such a woman, which abideth not the same, but is changed about continually.

* * * * *

And another is from a mare of mettle, whose shapely neck the yoke hath not touched.

Her soul abhorreth labour ; restraint is grievous unto her ; of necessity she maketh man her friend.

She turneth from the mill ; she putteth not her hand unto the grinding mill ; the oven and the sieve she cometh not nigh.

Lest they be a defilement unto her, and her raiment be soiled in the dust.

To the bath she goeth twice or thrice in the day ; she anointeth herself with myrrh ; with aloes and cinnamon is she perfumed withal.

She combeth out her hair and bindeth it not : it floweth down upon her shoulders.

It is shaded about with flowers ; yea, deep are the tresses thereof,

So that they who behold her marvel at her ; but to her husband she increaseth sorrow,

Except he be a king, or bear in his hand the sceptre of power,

Being set in the eyes of men, whose heart taketh pleasure in such things.

* * * * *

And another is from the bee. Happy is the man who hath her for a possession ;

For unto her alone among women reproach cometh not nigh.

From her life putteth forth its branches ; yea, it blossometh abundantly and hath increase.

Dear she is unto her husband ; she groweth old with the bridegroom of her youth ;

Having raised up unto him seed, even a goodly generation, whose praise is in the mouths of men.

She is had in honour among all women ; graciousness and reverence encompass her about.

She sitteth not among the froward women ; when their tongue speaketh vanity she hath no pleasure therein.

These are the most excellent women ; by them is made glad the heart of man ; than they, no better or more precious possession hath been given unto the children of men.

PART III

POEMS, SUBSEQUENT TO 1898

POESY

I

SING no more, for song is dead,
Wiser grown, the world is wooing
Wisdom ; heart is less than head,
Songs were made for our undoing.

All is thought and all is said,
Common fare the poet's rhyming ;
Tell me, when his lines are read,
What is gained by all his miming ?

' Song was sweet ere love had fled,'
Hear him sigh, while all about him
Life, with love in life, is led,
Quite content to do without him.

II

TREASON to poesy most base you say,
Those lines I wrote—ah, well ! but if I hold
What men call poesy a tale twice told
For idle moments, then I fain would lay
My pen aside, and for the rest make way ;
And think sometimes upon the vision old
Of him who, trembling, saw the smoke that rolled
About the shrine of God ; or him who lay
Dumb with the spirit's burden, while he strove
To escape the message dread, which, sealed in flame,
Fell on his lips ; or her, in pagan page,
To utterance doomed, though loth, what time the rage
Of deity constrained. Such fate to prove
Who lifts the burden and who dares the shame ?

1902.

IN THE WORLD

(A fragment.)

TALK not, for talk is vain,
Think not, for thought is pain,
Love, since there 's no hereafter,
'Tis but a thing for laughter.

Work—if we must ; then so
Into the fray we go,
Years ten or twenty, and then
Wealth and the praises of men ;

Women at least, perhaps fame,
All that is meant by a name,
Acres, a mansion—or two,
Dinners—and servants—ah, true !

Francee, Monte Carlo, le jeu,
'Ingleesh ? You speke Franch ? Un peu ?'
Jewels, a ménage sans gêne,
Chantilly, Paillard—what then ?

Travel—'qui trans mare,'—lor' !
Everything seems such a bore,
Always the same bill of fare,
People the same everywhere.

Marriage—'tis clear—à la mode,
Age is a troublesome load,
Home and a wife, rather clever,
Well-dressed of course, and who never

Fails in bon ton, two or three
Children at most. Let us see.

* * * *

June, and the town all a-roar,
Dances and parties galore,
Robinson finds it a riddle,
Jones is as fit as a fiddle.

Dinners and crushes, the play,
Dresses for those who can pay,
Or if they can't—it depends—
Schemers and schemes—so it ends.

Not amiss either—but ah !
There is our couple, mama
With them and radiant—in short
See *Morning Post* under ' Court.'

Here where in stories the page
Ends in the middle—a sage
Warns us a story must blend
That with beginning and end—

Ours must continue ; for time
Brings its revenges, though rhyme
Only may hint them ; and life
Really begins when a wife

Takes up the running ; and so
Since it 's agreed that we go
Out like a candle at death,
Snuffed out by any light breath,

Carpe diem, put away
All but the thought of to-day ;
One thing is certain—its measure
Money, so get it—that 's pleasure.

See her then launched on its sea
Bravely, while in her wake he
Follows or floats, and the pace
Daily increasing the space.

And—since such craft require sails
Cut to the mood of all gales,
Squalls and caprice of light airs—
Bills for refits and repairs.

What may occur at this stage,
Written on many a page,
Fancy and fact have recorded,
Trivial, romantic and sordid.

And, since it seems that the flower
Only was made for its hour—
Rather elaborate, true,
For such a purpose, a few

Filaments less might have done
Equally well—perhaps it 's one
Whether its delicate chalice
Droops in a hut or a palace.

Leaving then circumstance, find
Something we can't leave, the mind—
Traps to avoid, on the whole,
Better not call it the soul ;

Not what we use when we take
Thought for the morrow and make
Plans for to-day, or peruse
Bills, correspondence and news ;

Not that, but something we feel
Sometimes in moments which steal
Into the fissures betwixt
All those engagements we fixed

Three months ahead, or which makes
Troublesome work out of lakes,
Mountains and skies, when the dawn
Finds us a trifle forlorn,

After a night put behind us,
Crowded, with naught to remind us,
Suppers, cigars, chaff and laughter,
Dancing, or better, Bridge after ;

Heard in the drift of the trees
Bent to the beating of showers,
Heard in the murmur of bees,
Felt in the fragrance of flowers ;

Here, yet so far—but oh, why
Come back these echoes heart-wringing ?
Sages of science reply,
Are they from faults in upbringing ?

If we were bred without flaw,
'Trained by your rules and well mated,
Schooled in the system of law
By which existence is fated,

Could you subdue to your scheme
Accident, failure and sorrow,
Banish regret or the dream
By which to-day fools to-morrow ?

Even if science can find
For our amours all variety,
Freed from results, will the mind
Also be freed from satiety ?

And for that age, which, upreared,
Life's present cycle will double,
What when the harvest is eared
Will be its harvest of trouble ?

I—you may think me a boor—
Formed long ago the conclusion,
That half the woes of the poor,
Wept over, are an illusion.

Pity I keep in reserve
More for the victims of pleasure,
More for who 've time to observe
Phantoms which people their leisure.

* * * * *

Therefore I think, on the whole,
That in this world of poor sinners
Strenuous search for the soul
Is more important than dinners.

(The rest was unfinished.)

1902.

SUMMER DAWN

FAINT and far, now fainter borne,
Louder now, now softly dying,
Stir the whispers of the morn,
Skies to ghostly skies replying.

Hark ! a loud adventurous call
From impatient chantiecleer,
Waking sounds which rise and fall
Fitful on earth's drowsy ear.

Sleep affrighting, near and far,
Now they gather more and more,
Till the sun with labouring car
Sets the mighty world aroar.

1902.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

SLEEP, now no more the world thy spirit calling ;
Sleep, recking naught what ills of earth befalling ;
Dreamless of dreams the hearts of earth appalling—
Rest now in peace.

Cold on his brow the dews of death were lying ;
Came the chill breath their clinging languors drying ;
Came the white change and into beauty, sighing,
Passed that still face.

Tears, there were tears, but what avails our weeping ?
Time evermore death's harvest still is reaping ;
Tears are of earth ; the dead in peace are sleeping ;
Rest then in peace.

Peace, rest in peace, our foolish words unheeding ;
Peace, rest in peace, our love no longer needing ;
Spirit of Love, in mortal weakness pleading,
Grant him Thy peace !

1902.

TO THE BELOVED

To sit beside her, to behold her face,
Dwell on her accents, linger in her smile,
Were such sweet pleasure, that all joy and grace,
The world contains, were gathered in the while

To that dear moment, to the folded peace
Of that still haven, where a man might lay
All effort by and seek for no release
From bands so sweet to while his soul away

From life's long labour. But the vision dies ;
A voice cries ' Onward,' though the path be pain ;
Not here the guerdon, under other skies
A world, new made, may bloom in flowers again.

HIS MARRIAGE

TAKE, at my hand, the Angel said,
This woman, for a little space
Thy life's companion, in whose face
Is writ the riddle of the dead.

Behold her beauteous. See that thou
Reverence that beauty ; not for thee
Was fashioned forth this mystery
By Him before whose throne we bow ;

We, who in Heaven, with wondering eyes,
Behold His glory, and the plan
Pereceive, which Love divine for man
Perfects through pain and sacrifice.

Spirit and flesh, the mystic band
Is bound for thee in sacrament.
Take her ! The given is but lent ;
I shall require her at thine hand.

1902.

THOUGHTS

You say the times are evil ; that the beast
Of Force runs riot in the realm of Law,
Devouring blindly with insatiate maw
Our garnered heritage : from West and East,
Rallied by poet, hounded on by priest,
The people raven for the lust of war,
While Peace and Wisdom, shamefaced and in awe
Of Place and Power, are driven from the feast.
What wouldst thou ? Surfeited, these latter years,
With gentle ministrations from the store
Of God's large bounty, pleasure, wealth and ease,
Joyaunce of life, immunity from fears,
Did thy large freedom then thy spirit please,
Or turn thy heart to worship Him the more ?

1902.

WAR

A HOSTEL—' 5 A.M. It rains. My men
Are in full march. All my affairs go well.
I hold them baffled, and the day will tell
The issue. Have no fear. I love you.—N.'¹
The battle, closing over field and fen,
Found them undaunted. Fate ran out the spell
Of fifty thousand in that game of hell.
Rotting they lay, recorded by no pen.
The ragged Victory cheered and took its fill,
Pleading necessity which knows no law,
If plea were meet, or, blind to good or ill,
With death at elbow, and the earth a field
For their swords' reaping, what its tilth would yield
Reaped, and endured the rest. Friend, that was war.

1902.

¹ From a letter from Napoleon to Josephine.

A POLITICAL ARGUMENT

A. ONCE statesmen ruled, by 'business men' called
fools,

And England dwelt at peace, securely great ;
But times are changed ; a business man now rules,
And drives our England headlong to her fate.

B. What, then, of Palmerston, and what of Pitt,
Bismarck, Napoleon (add them for my rhymes) ?
Did they at City counter ever sit ?
Yet they made war. The change is in the times.

A. Take rather Peel and Gladstone, Bright and Lowe,
Statesmen who ruled the country at its best,
[*B.* To business they owed nothing, as we know !]
The people prospered and the land had rest.

B. And truth grew perjured, liberty defamed !
Poets are liars, once a wise man said,
But when he died who wrote it, we exclaimed
That he was numbered with the mighty dead.

A. Then you applaud the war ?
B. Nay, I would leave
That threadbare issue. But that wars will cease,
While man is man, I see not, nor believe
War is all evil, or all blessing peace.

1902.

RESULTS

For life is sweet, men hold, and when we die
All is forgotten. Therefore let us live,
And seize the pleasure that the times may give,
Ere in the common earth we mouldering lie.
First love ; but love is deep, and heaven is high,
And deep thoughts madden, and the years are brief.
'The wise world smiles and sets its bounds to grief ;
Is there not fame and all that wealth can buy ?

Thirsting we ask, and rush into the fray,
See baseness triumph and good men go down,
And liars lift the prize and no redress,
Ere yet the night blots out our little day.
Is there no dawning, and is that the crown
For all this blood and sweat and emptiness ?

1902.

A CAREER

HATING them in his heart, 'My friends,' he 'd say,
'Good friends of mine,' who, watching for the will
Imperious, as some said, or thought, that lay
Behind half veiled eyes, which seemed to fill
With sudden fires, soon quenched, conspired to keep
Fastened about his feet the bands which fate
And circumstance had laid. Waters run deep
Where they are still, 'tis said, and those who wait
May yet attain. So that success he prized
Came, and they flocked to praise him, and his smile
Sought, which, withheld, they marked in him for pride,
Who, seeming to despise them, more despised
Himself and all the world, and so the while
Ruled for his hour, and unregretted died.

TO A HUMAN SOUL

DEAR thought of comfort, heaven of my desire,
So fair, so far, so hoped for, if the thing
We call our life may brave the vanishing
Of earthly hopes, and from the wasteful fire,
Where sinks for each his perishable pyre,
Mount to new regions on up quivering wing,
Like lark at break of dawn, and mounting sing
The song we might not utter, where the lyre
On willow hanging told of our despair—
O misery, if there our hopes lie dead
Where to the winds our ashes widely blown
Add dust to dust, then, then nor art thou fair,
Nor yet my heaven ; all 's one so we were wed
For a brief hour, or if I die alone.

SONG

AH, mistress mine, whose laughing eyes
Sit sentinel about my heaven,
If to sad looks and speaking sighs
To pass their cruel ward 'twere given,

Sad would I look and sigh full sore,
And every sigh should be a dart,
To summon thee to ope the door,
And yield the fortress of thy heart.

But, since those sighs must fail, I 'll sit
In siege, for time to bring thee down,
And lay out parallels of wit,
And mines of laughter round thy town ;

Till haply, starved of love, thou 'lt raise
A flag of truce and treaty sign,
In binding pledge for future days,
To join thy sovereignty to mine.

1902.

1882-1902

WE said there was an earthly goal
Of pleasure for the human soul.
The gospel of the social movement
Lay in material improvement,
Obedience to the laws of health,
A just apportionment of wealth,
That all might have sufficient leisure
Ensured for intellectual pleasure,
To breathe the air and see the sun
After the day's light task was done.
In men at large some failed to find
A wish to cultivate the mind
Apart from profit and the power
Which knowledge brings, but, as the flower
Succeeds the bud, enough if we
Discerned the latter—thus agree.
Others, of questioning mind, in this
Picture of ours, still seemed to miss
Something desired by men who trod
The earth before, which they called ' God ' ;
Expressing, doubtless, by that plan
The dignity they saw in Man.
Life's shattered hopes and efforts vain,
The old indignity of pain,

Misfortune starving on a dole,
The body that affronts the soul,
The clouded mind, shot with the gleam,
At best, of youth's mistaken dream—
All this, and more, might be amended,
If, say, the House of Lords were ended.
Then came a war to make us doubt
If certain forces were burnt out ;
And now a town, beneath a mountain,
Is licked up by a fiery fountain.¹
The moral ? Men unborn may read,
Perchance, the moral in a Creed.

¹ Eruption of Mont Pelée.

1902.

LIFE'S PROBLEM

FOLLY must flourish that a few grow wise ;
Lilies turn rank that oaks may spread a shade ;
In violence the steadfast soul is made,
And love by hate, and truth is known by lies.
And evermore ascends the sacrifice
Of blighted innocence and youth betrayed.
On girlhood's cheek the antic smile is laid
Of venal misery which pleasure buys.
The ruined frame of suffering may contain
A spirit chastened, while in fairest shell
Festers a carrion soul. But time derides
The body's shipwreck. If the spirit's pain
In no eternity of hope abides,
How fierce the torment and how deep this hell !

1902.

RODIN

RODIN, how hardly from that world of stone
Were won those forms, which seem, methinks, to
 speak

The unuttered language of the souls that seek

A lost communion, dwelling here alone.

Was it the agony of ages grown

Weary of mortal things, which prompted thee

To mock us with the insufficiency

Of our poor earthly loves, that thou hast shown

Bare to a curious world thy secret dream ?

Or did thy spirit, travailing to a thrill

Creative from some deep eternity,

Unfold a vision, fashioned to its will,

Like thine own marble, through the things that seem,

Of things which are, but here may never be ?

1902.

A LATE AUTUMN DAY

CLEAR, limpid airs, a heaven washed wide by rains,
Storm-driven from a waste of weltering seas,
Sparkle of dew at dawn, a glow that wanes
At eve in wonder through the darkened trees.

Fleeces of cloud far-flung, a floor of dreams
For the bright feet of radiant spirit things,
Voices of earth and air, the swirl of streams,
The poise of birds, their play, the drift of wings.

Space and the stillness—'tis a soul at peace,
Passion put from it, gleaned at the close
A wayward pleasure in its own release
From life that reaps but where another sows.

1902.

AT AN EXHIBITION OF OLD SILVER

ART, to beguile a London afternoon,
Had made a show of silver, and we went,
Critics to view it ; caskets there were lent,
Bowls, with a trinket here, and there a spoon,
A dancing scene of nymphs beneath the moon,
Wrought on a salver, cups with gems besprent,
A helmet riven with aneestral dent,
And much besides. I gazed, but, wearied soon,
Was leaving, when I saw a chalice old,
And of such austere beauty that it seemed
The legendary grail. Beneath the mould
Long it had lain. The altar stood, there streamed
A mailèd host, the ' Miserere ' rolled,
Sangraal ! It was a cup, and I had dreamed.

1902.

‘ EVERYMAN ’

(*A Morality Play.*)

EVERYMAN ! O solemn-sounding knell,
Heard, if still heard, across the fields of Time,
Stern as the beating of this iron rhyme,
From a rude age thy message comes to tell,
To ears unused, of mysteries that dwell
Divinely deep beneath the throes which stir
The spirit faring on those ways that err
Unbeaconed through the void 'twixt heaven and hell.
Everyman ! But there are pleasant ways,
And life is here and the long quest is vain—
So smiles an easy age and curious reads
Of judgment, righteousness divine, and pain
For sin decreed, with shortening of the days
When God, in mercy, with Man's spirit pleads.

1903.

PRÆTERITA

A MAN of mark he was, who bore
Rule in his family,
And eke the parish, where he held
An undisputed sway.

In simple life was all his joy,
Yet deeply could he preach,
And what he knew, though humbly still,
He ever loved to teach.

Seldom the story of distress
Would fail his heart to woo,
He gave them what he had, but while
They blessed, they feared him too.

And ever, with a kindly word,
Held out the helping hand,
And bore no tales, remembering
His Master's great command.

Clear was life and plain to view,
As through an open door ;
For all he had a courteous word,
But chiefly for the poor.

So lived he, till that Master took
The spirit which He gave.
Pass softly by, but shed no tear
Upon his quiet grave.

1902.

IN MEMORIAM, R. H.

WE raised the glass and wished him well,
Strangely, methought, a silence fell,
As if, arrested by his eye,
Each one had caught the grave reply
No words might speak, in that last hour
Of quiet cheer, when fruit and flower
Made glad the board where we were met
To speed him hence. 'Tis but the debt
To England, and each day her shore
Sends after them the nevermore,
Who, parting, breathe the brave farewell
To home and kin ; and could we tell
The issue, should we hope and dare ?
Hoping he left us. Let them bear
Their part thus ever, in whose hands
Is set the wardship of those lands
'Twixt friend and foeman, and who keep
Their lonely vigil while we sleep.

1906.

‘ IF THE DEAD ARE NOT RAISED ’

If by this mortal span we call our life
All effort is enclosed, for good or ill,
The garland withered which rewards the strife
At the tomb's icy breath, the steadfast will
Which held us on our way, where lust and ease,
Reaching beguiling arms, oft bade us seek
From the long fruitless task a sweet release,
Profits no further than the purpose weak,
But weak and strong together in the grave
Are blotted out by the same earth and dust,
With nothing left of all our thoughts to save
From Time's devouring moth and brutish rust ;
What boots our life, which lived is but a lie ?
Eat then and drink, to-morrow since we die.

‘ I LOOKED UPON THE DEAD ’

I LOOKED upon the dead which lay
Where but a moment since it drew
A long last breath, now helpless clay :
Was that, I asked, the man I knew ?

Fit for the dogs, a loathsome thing,
Which we must hide from sight of day,
Lest it corrupt the air and bring
A plague upon the common way.

And, as I looked, the answer came,
And into strong assurance grew,
That what was he was still the same,
And this was not the man I knew.

A VISION OF LIFE

HER babe upon her breast and she
By the low fire a vision seemed,
Through which at that still hour for me
The soul's transfiguration streamed.

Mother and child, embosomed now
In spirit life made manifest,
As aureole about the brow
Of pictured saint is seen to rest.

And all the knowledge that I knew
Became as nothing and a name,
Seen by the things which into view
About those passive beings came.

Spirit in flesh—the more or less
Incarnate, never here the whole—
Waiting the birth which shall express
The unshaped ardours of the soul.

A WISH

SWEET, if, in worlds untrodden yet, there be
Hope for the wretched and a place wherein
The soul with sorrow laden and by sin
Defiled may yet attain tranquillity,
Methinks it should be where the sight of thee,
Cleansed from the pain of all that might have been,
Bids a new morrow in my heart begin,
When thy mild eyes in love shall look on me,
To meet them unashamed. O, heavenly bliss,
When for those soft allurements which reveal
A gentle spirit, and for that ill-won
Desire which mocks fulfilment, what we feel
May be, not seem, nor fail ; but that alone
For those, the pure in heart, prepared is.

INFINITE WONDER OF WORLDS

INFINITE wonder of worlds self-poised through spaces
abysmal,
Fierce and fathomless fires in the garment of night set
as jewels,
Luminous flood of the dawn over gardens and cities
ascending,
Welcomed by voices of birds out of slumberous shadows
emerging
Into the day of our hopes and our travail renewed, I
would greet you ;

Greet you with song—but its flame in those heights
sinks baffled and broken,
Idle the words come back, like a bolt shot in air, where
all equal
Strength is with weakness ; but if from within speaks
the voiceless eternal,
Uttermost spaces of space and all time for the spirit
enfolding,
Silent I rest content, or with plain words only speaking.

At Sea, 1908.

A LONDON PARK

Cool glades and green, with drifts of daisies showered,
And flecked with sunlight, by o'erarching trees
Let through for loveliness, your lawns embowered
Invite the spirit to a dream of peace.

What secrets in your dim recesses lie ?
What nightly visitants, at dawn what feet
Frequent them unprofaned ? From mortal eye
Keep them, good gold-cap, on your sullen beat.

MOURN NOT

MOURN not, for if the things we lose
Are lost beyond repair,
They were not worth the sigh which shows
In breath upon the air.

And if fruition yet remains
Beyond this earthly bourne,
Where nothing springs but to decay,
There is no cause to mourn.

LA SOURCE

(*By Victor Hugo.*)

LA Source tombait du rocher
Goutte à goutte à la mer affreuse ;
L'Océan fatal au nocher
Lui dit :—Que me veux-tu, pleureuse ?

Je suis la tempête et l'effroie ;
Je finis où le ciel commence.
Est-ce-que j'ai besoin de toi,
Petite, moi, qui suis l'immense ?

La source dit au gouffre amer :
Je le donne sans bruit ni gloire
Ce qui te manque, O vaste mer !
Une goutte d'eau qu'on peut boire !

Translation

A SPRING was falling from the rock,
Drop by drop to the dreadful sea ;
Said the wave, rolling to the shock,
‘ What wantst thou, crying thing, with me ? ’

‘ I am the tempest, I am fear,
I finish where begins the sky ;
Of thee, th’ immense without a peer,
Poor little one, what need have I ? ’

To the salt gulf the spring replied :
‘ What none may gather at thy brink
I give with neither noise nor pride,
A drop of water fit to drink.’

[Included in a letter to the *Saturday Review*, 15th August 1914, in which I expressed the opinion that this fine poem of Victor Hugo was a parable of the relations of the sexes, especially in times of war.—
E. G. H.]

WAR VERSES

THE GUNS

(As heard in Kent.)

ALL day upon the listening air
More plainly heard their message came ;
What they are doing, how they fare,
Who hold our English soil
At guard, we asked, and fame.

What lives are passing as we speak,
We thought, but said not, over there,
Where stark amid the noise and reck
They lie, our lads, beyond
The reach of love or prayer.

And is there care in heaven, we ask,
That this should be, or are we left
Alone to labour at the task,
Alone through days and nights,
Of help and hope bereft ?

Or is God labouring at the guns
Which shake the air through nights and days,
With labour such as shaped the suns
And saw that they were good,
And sent them on their ways ?

Then must His anguish be as ours,
As ours the hope of victory,
And triumph over darkest powers,
The shaping of the birth
Which a new day shall see.

The peaceful sheep move grazing on
Beneath the quiet midnight skies,
The sun still shines as it has shone
Four years ; oh, breaking hearts !
Oh, human hearts and sighs !

Yet faithful hearts, oh, what avail
Our little griefs, if in the plan
Divine we stand and do not fail
To answer to the call
Which comes to every man ?

Guard we the thought, that those who here,
When we are gone, shall keep this land
From foemen clean, may hold it dear,
And in that faith
Abide and stand.

1918.

ON THE CLIFFS

WITH grief and wonder the guns' dull thunder
Dismays my heart as across the sea
Mine eyes are gazing from where sheep grazing
Are spread in peace on the quiet lea.

Tears unavailing, yet still prevailing,
Else must a woman's heart-strings break,
Where winds are sighing and seamews crying,
They swell the flood of the bitter lake.

Here sweet to fancy wild thyme and pansy
Push tiny blossoms between the blades
Of salt-stung grasses whose taste surpasses
The deepest tilth of the inland glades.

Dear earth and cherished, what hopes have perished
Since on your bosom once I lay,
In life's unfolding promises holding
Of joys which withered lie to-day.

1918.

BEREAVEMENT

Oh world, oh barren ways,
Which now my feet must tread,
With thoughts of vanished days
Companions of my bed !

The breath of heaven divine,
The solace of the rain,
Their sweetness is not mine,
Their joy is turned to pain.

The rushing of the tide
Upon the sounding shore,
Its ecstasy has died,
And stirs my blood no more.

No more upon the lawn
The thrush with nimble feet
Is pleasing, or the dawn
Rises with fragrance sweet.

Unmarked the evening light
Is spread on field and tree,
The glories of the night
No message have for me.

For heavy at my heart
There lies the thought of one
Of whom I was a part,
With whom has set my sun.

And sometimes in the night,
When all is dark and still,
There grows upon my sight
The vision of a hill

Somewhere in France, the day
Is closing and the ground
In the dim light and grey
Is strewn with dead around.

And faint upon the air
I think I hear a cry,
Which seems an uttered prayer
Extinguished in a sigh.

My feet take wings, and lo,
I walk among the dead,
And searching as I go,
I raise each heavy head.

Oh love, once quick and warm,
Laid here by death's chill dart !
I clasp his lifeless form,
And strain it to my heart.

1918.

BRITANNIA

THEY said that in a shameful dream
Of selfish ease her sons were bound,
That from her eyes had passed the gleam
Which lit them once when tyrants frowned ;

That fallen from her nerveless hand
Upon the ground her sceptre lay,
And all her deeds by sea and land
Were but the story of a day.

Oh Britain, little did they know,
Who prated thus of them and thee,
Thy sure strong arm to deal a blow,
As erst, for right and liberty.

Smite on in faith, nor stay until,
Whatever craven voices cry,
The Teuton, bending to thy will,
Shall learn to swallow down his lie.

July, 1918.

A BOMB IN THE TEMPLE

GUNS ! or maroons ? in any case a raid.
That beastly cellar ! On a night like this,
Cold with December rains ! Well, fire, so long !
Keep in till I return. Come, overcoat !
Boots ? they will take too long ; better be going.
That, surely, was a bomb ; what ! three together ?
They must be near by now—caught our men napping
Perhaps—the usual line, across the river,
Paul's the objective or perchance the Bank,
Over the Temple up Chancery Lane,
Scoring a miss somewhere in Bloomsbury.
This time perhaps the Temple—goodness knows ;
A cellar's best. I found them there already :
' Stand here, my dear ; best where the wall is thick,
In case we got it near.' ' Seymour was good
In the Adelphi piece.' ' When did you see him ? '
So it went on, and seemed a pose of chatter,
Done for effect, or haply to conceal
A sense of fear, tiresome in any case ;
So that at last, impatient grown, I mounted
The groping stair, and in an archway stood,
To see, I thought, how the affair was going ;
When suddenly some crumbling masonry
Fell in the court, and all was still ; the scatterings

Of our own guns, I said, and thought no more
But that th' attack had passed. The morning after
Came to my door the fireman, on the business
Of a Christmas box : ' Good morning, Sir, your usual
May I request, with my best compliments ?
Severe attack last night, Sir, in the court
Close by here a bomb fell, one of the heaviest,
An aerial torpedo, I myself
Was in the navy and know all about them ;
Fell on Pump Court, Sir, and the cap came off it,
Failed to explode, but passed right through the
building
Into the cellar, then up through the grating
Into Hare Court ; would you believe it ? people
Were there this morning poking it about
With their umbrellas, till the military
Came and removed it. Had it exploded, Sir,
Everything round would have been blown to pieces.'
' Bless me,' I said, ' a German Christmas present ;
That 's what I heard, then ' ; and I told him how
I had left the cellar, like a fool, and waited
Under an arch ; I felt ashamed to tell it.
' Well, sir, you 'd luck ; good day, and thank you
kindly.'
Sobered thereat I thought of my ill-temper ;
Vowed I would check it ; had it not almost
Cost me my life ? When there were cellars handy,
To stand in the open merely to escape
Some harmless chatter ; vowed I had deserved
My fate if it had come ; and still sometimes
At night, when all is still, I seem to hear
A fancied bomb ; a raid ! and then remember
The war is over and that I was dreaming,
And turn to sleep again. O wandering mind,

Be still ; or soon or late the destined end
Must come, and other feet will tread
These ancient stairs ; others will stir the fire
Against December days. The Temple stands
Unviolated by Teutonic hands.

1919.

THE GLORIOUS DEAD

Ask not their names ; the land and sea,
With the o'er-arching firmament,
Unite for evermore to be
Their sepulchre and monument ;

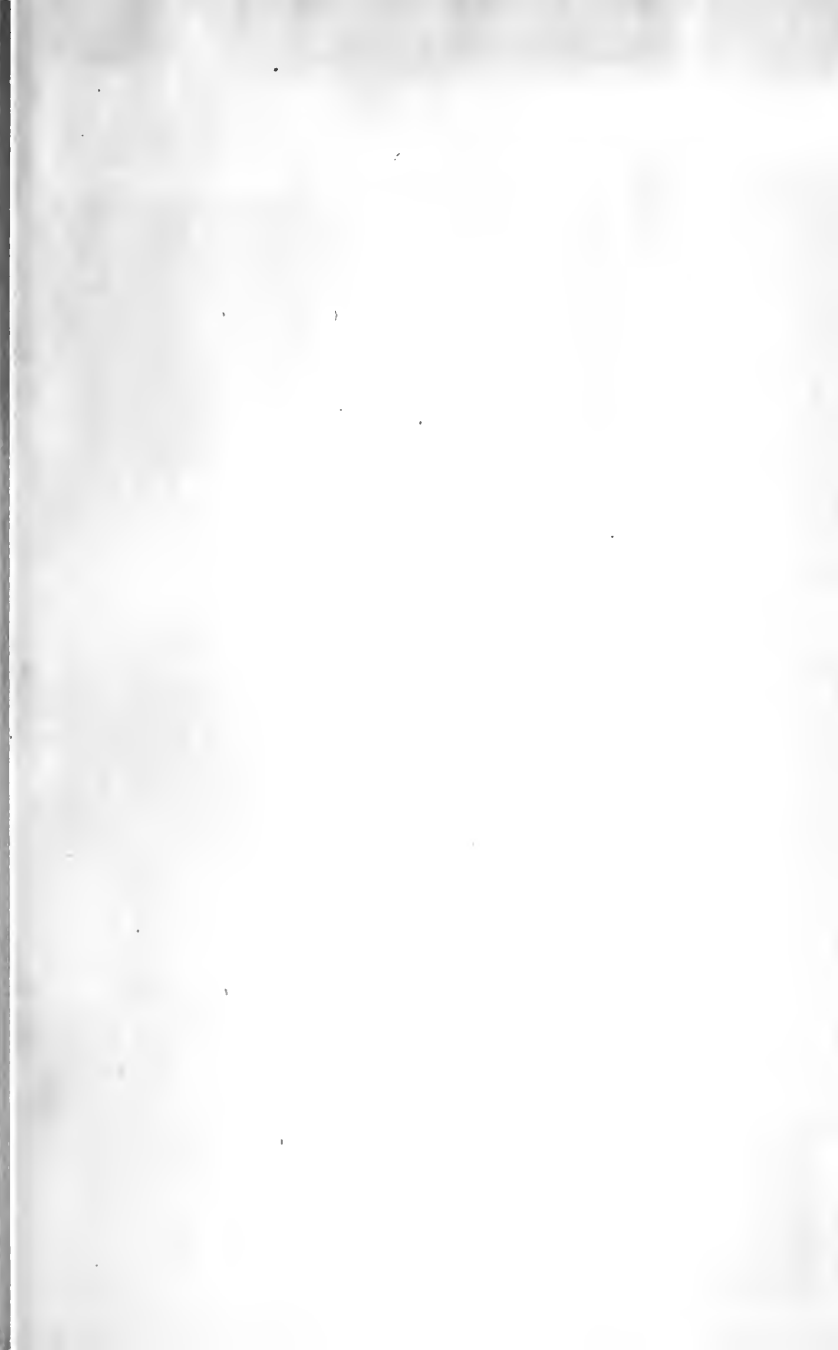
That, mingled with the common air,
Their spirit, growing into ours,
May live, as spring, when days are fair,
From blackest earth brings back the flowers ;

That, nourished in their larger life,
We, in their strength and fortitude,
May hold our course, whate'er of strife
May lie in store, or trials rude.

They are not dead, though they are gone
From us who for a little stay ;
Let not the crown which they have won
Be ours to lose or cast away.

1919.

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